

ARIZONA Planning Bulletin



Phoenix South Resource Management Plan
Sonoran Desert National Monument Resource Management Plan

Bureau of Land Management • Phoenix Field Office

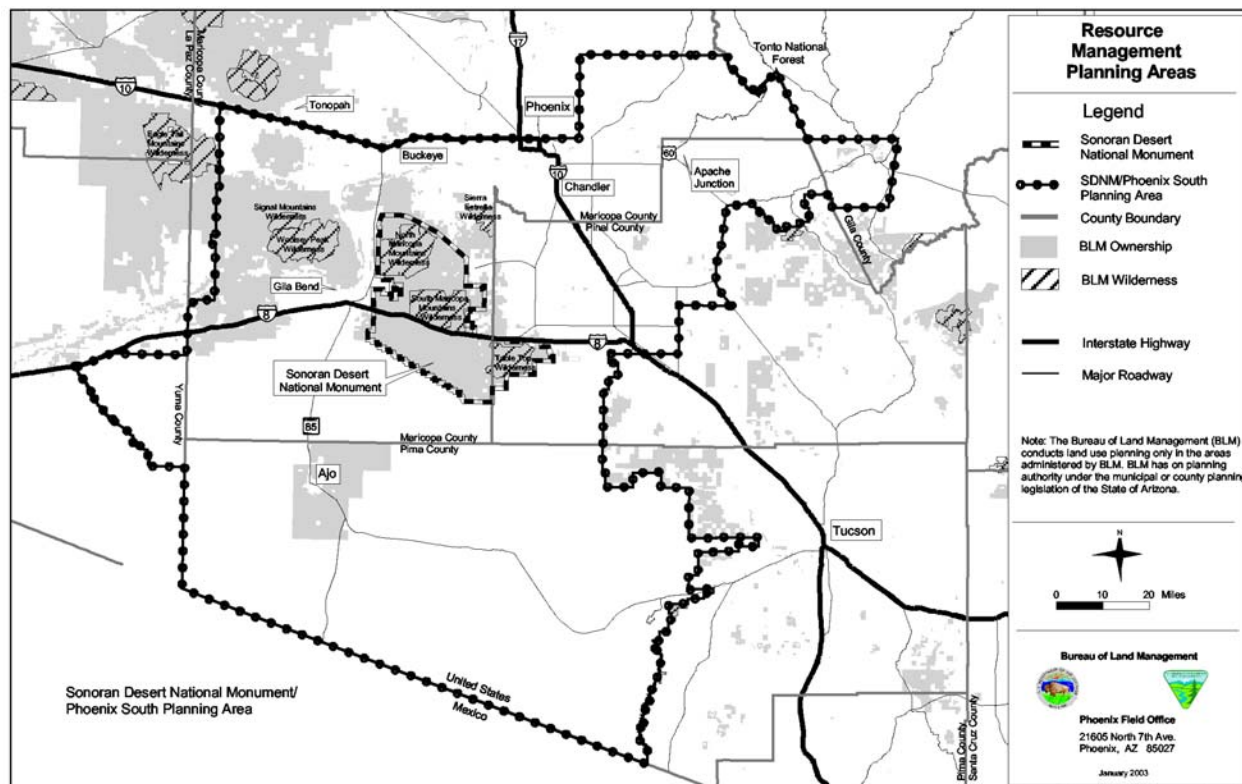
January 2003, Vol. 1

Welcome to planning for the public lands.

Resource management planning is the way the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), working with the public, decides how to manage the public lands for the future. This planning process will take a comprehensive look at the management of about 1.42 million acres of the BLM-administered public lands in two areas:

- Sonoran Desert National Monument
- “Phoenix South” - public lands south of Phoenix

This is the first in a series of planning bulletins that will familiarize you with the planning process and planning areas. We are also asking that you help us out by identifying management goals, issues, and concerns that you think should be addressed in the plans. The enclosed *Planning Worksheets* are one way we will gather ideas. Another is through a series of open houses; the dates and locations are listed inside this bulletin. We encourage you to be a part of this very important process; we want to hear your ideas. Thank you for joining us in planning for the future of our public lands.



Why are these plans needed?

The Sonoran Desert National Monument was designated in January 2001, with the signing of Presidential Proclamation 7397. The monument encompasses approximately 486,000 acres of Sonoran desert landscape. It includes a rich diversity of plants and animals, as well as many significant archaeological and historic resources. The purpose of the monument designation is to protect the area's natural, cultural, scientific and educational resources. Establishment of the national monument necessitates the development of a Resource Management Plan (RMP).

The metro-Phoenix area has experienced significant growth in recent years, and is expected to continue to grow rapidly in the future. Associated with this growth is increased use of and interest in the public lands. The public lands have important wildlife, scenic, cultural, recreation, vegetation, wilderness, grazing, mineral, and other values. The increased pressure on public lands for recreation, rights-of-way, mineral rights, and other purposes resulting from population increases requires the BLM to readdress its land use plan decisions.

What are we doing?

We will be developing two Resource Management Plans, one for each of the planning areas. We will also be developing an environmental impact statement (EIS). The EIS will assess possible environmental, social, and economic effects of different management alternatives for public lands within the two planning areas.

The planning process is expected to take about three years and involves several steps. There will be many opportunities for public involvement, beginning with the first step, *Public Scoping and Issue Identification*, which this bulletin addresses. We encourage you to get involved in this process to help us identify what issues the plan should address by sending us comments and attending the public meetings. Additional opportunities for public involvement will continue as we develop the management alternatives to address the issues identified during scoping and when we issue the draft plan. At each stage, the BLM will hold public meetings to ensure public involvement. The project schedule is shown below.

Project Schedule

This schedule shows the major planning tasks and opportunities for public involvement. Adjustments to this schedule will occur depending on final budget appropriations in 2003, as well as due to issues identified as we proceed through the planning process and other reasons. The project schedule can also be found on the BLM Arizona web page, at www.az.blm.gov.

Phoenix South and Sonoran Desert National Monument Planning Schedule

Task	Begin Date	End Date
Hold Public Scoping Meetings	February 2003	March 2003
Issue Scoping Report, Public Review	May 2003	June 2003
Develop management alternatives - Public meetings	June 2003	November 2003
Develop Environmental Impact Statement	December 2003	May 2004
Issue Draft Plans, Draft EIS	July 2004	July 2004
Public review of draft - Public meetings	July 2004	September 2004
Prepare Proposed plans, final EIS	October 2004	May 2005
Issue Proposed plans, final EIS	June 2005	June 2005
Protest period, develop final plans	July 2005	November 2005
Issue final plans, Record of Decision	December 2005	December 2005

Staying involved

The BLM is committed to providing opportunities for the public to be meaningfully involved in the resource management planning and environmental review process. We will work closely with communities and interested citizen groups to identify management decisions best suited to the needs of the public. The BLM is also seeking participation from tribal, state, and local governments. In order to create a shared vision for the planning areas, we will use an interactive, dynamic process that will allow you to participate in developing alternative concepts for managing public lands.

If you have access to the internet, you can follow the progress of the planning process on the BLM home page (www.az.blm.gov). This site will include relevant documents for review and provides information regarding upcoming public information.

While the planning team welcomes your comments and suggestions at all times, please remember that your input is particularly important in the early stages of the planning process when the team is developing the management options. **Scoping comments will be accepted through March 31, 2003.**

Thank you for your interest in this important process. We look forward to working with you. For further information or if you need special accommodations, please contact:

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Scoping Open House Meeting Schedule

Eleven open house meetings will be held at the following locations, dates, and times:

Monday, February 10, 6-8 pm – Maricopa
Maricopa Secondary School, cafeteria
45012 Honeycutt Avenue

Tuesday, February 11, 6-8 pm – Gila Bend
Gila Bend Community Center
202 North Euclid Street

Wednesday, February 12, 6-8 pm – Casa Grande
Parks & Recreation Office, Armadillo room
404 East Florence Blvd

Thursday, February 13, 6-8 pm – Globe-Miami
Globe High School, Auditorium
455 North Willow

Tuesday, February 18, 6-8 pm – Ajo
Ajo Community Center
Bud Walker Park
290 5th Avenue

Wednesday, February 19, 2-4 pm – Sells
Council Chambers
Tribal Headquarters, Sells

Thursday, February 20, 6-8 pm – Tucson
Arizona Game & Fish Department
555 North Greasewood Road

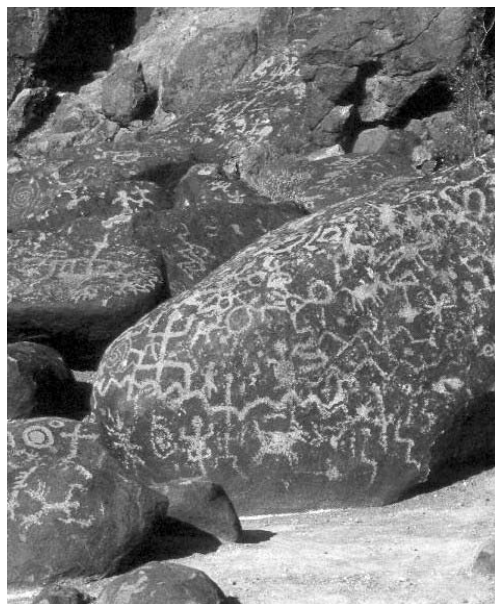
Monday, February 24, 6-8 pm – Buckeye
Buckeye Community Center
201 Centre Avenue

Tuesday, February 25, 6-8 pm – Mesa
Mesa Centennial Center, Apache Room
201 North Center Street

Thursday, February 27, 6-8 pm – Phoenix
BLM Phoenix Field Office
21605 North 7th Avenue

Thursday, March 6, 6-8 pm – Yuma
BLM Yuma Field Office
2555 East Gila Ridge Road

Please join the Bureau of Land Management in planning for your public lands!



Phoenix South/SDNM Planning
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